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OCR Comments on DD/I Staff Paper of 17 March 1958

"INTELLIGENCE COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATED PROCEDURES"

Appraisal and Recommendations

This paper concerns both the mechanical and organizational aspects of intelligence communications from collection to its utilization by the intelligence production analyst. In essence, it appears to state two things:

1) The state of the telecommunications art enables us to meet today the technical requirements of a rapid communications system--something the intelligence community sorely needs.

2) The installation of this high-capacity system will require extensive changes in the present organization and work habits of the intelligence community, which changes themselves will result in greatly improving the present system.

This poses the question: Why not do (2) above first, since this must be done in any case? Then, having approached the completion of (2), get to work on (1) because large outlays of funds can be justified much more readily. In OCR's judgment, no agreement will be reached to inaugurate technical changes until the organizational and procedural changes which are implied are spelled out in detail.

OCR agrees wholeheartedly with the objective, but believes that results will not be forthcoming until progress is made in area (2). Work on this area is of prime concern to the Committee on Documentation.

It is OCR's recommendation, therefore, to turn over the present paper to the technicians for more detailed planning and to work up a comparable plan to deal with organizational and procedural changes. The following pages outline possible approaches to some of the aspects of area (2), which are of concern to OCR.

OCR Interest

The mission and competence of OCR lie in the problems relating to receipt, dissemination, and indexing of incoming materials. The DD/I draft memorandum is concerned with the basic problem of timely receipt (within 24 hours) of information from the field collector by the appropriate intelligence production analyst(s). OCR's role as a central reference repository is not considered a prime factor but ancillary to the process under consideration. These comments are addressed, therefore, to problems of dissemination and distribution.

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Characteristics of Current Reporting

A large proportion of incoming information reports are in response to guide-type requirements which have been consolidated from the individual requirements of a number of consumers responsible for separate, but related, research subjects. In many instances, the same information is of primary interest to a number of consumers covering seemingly unrelated fields; or information of primary interest to one consumer is of secondary value to another. This results in a heterogeneous overlap of interest so that any incoming document is of value usually to a number of consumers.

Effects of Proposed Equipment on Intelligence Processes

Except for the provision for production of multiple copies, the procedures for dissemination are not covered in the DD/I draft. It is not apparent that changes in the mechanical means of transmission or a drastic reduction in total transmission time will eliminate the human judgment processes of today's dissemination system.

Dissemination Procedures

To effect 24-hour delivery from the field collector to the intelligence producer, the intermediate steps of dissemination as presently set up should be revised drastically. Whether the responsibility for proper addressee dissemination should be placed with the originator or should be converted to a coded classification and automatically disseminated to pre-determined recipients or whether other procedures should be adopted are matters for study and trial. Other related problems concern the transmission of books, maps, magazines, and other single-copy materials not suitable for transmission by tape, and the establishment of priorities.

AS4A Implications for Headquarters

The following routing techniques might be employed in headquarters:

1. Sender direct to Requestor, with additional dissemination responsibilities placed upon Sender and/or Requestor.

2. Sender via Disseminator to Requestor, with additional dissemination determined at the intermediate step.

3. Sender to Central Disseminator, with all dissemination responsibility placed upon Central Disseminator.

Method No. 1 would require that each collector be thoroughly and currently familiar with over-all document dissemination. It is believed that this routine would diffuse the responsibility to such an extent that dissemination would become everybody's headache and nobody's responsibility.

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Method No. 2 approximates current procedures.

Method No. 3 would centralize all dissemination responsibilities.

Tape transmissions with facilities for multiple copying by recipient would alleviate the present bottle-neck of shared copies, but would create an acute problem for secure storage of the increased paper volume. This situation might prompt revision of reporting formats, with more refined subject breakdowns, permitting more precise and accurate subject coding.

Report Formats

Many of the reporting formats presently in use permit inclusion of a variety of information in a single report--usually all from one source or a periodic accumulation under such broad categories as "economic", "scientific" or "military." This system reduces the "number" of reports and minimizes the time and space required for descriptions and evaluations of sources and the recordation necessary for administration and management. On the other hand, it increases considerably the volume of reading and extracting to be done by the recipient analysts. When materials must be recovered from OCR files (Intellofax, Aperture Cards, or other) the research analyst must cull through pages upon pages to locate the items of value to him. Another example of repetitious scanning of the same material is the FBIS Daily Reports. Separate copies are delivered to requesting Branches. In each Branch, someone (clerical or professional) must scan the three daily publications for the half-dozen pages pertinent to that Branch's responsibility. It is probable that this operation is repeated every day in many Branches receiving the Daily Report.

Almost any multiple subject document must be scanned in its entirety by all receiving units. No estimate is being attempted as to the total time spent per day in scanning unrelated materials by the personnel of intelligence production units within CIA, but it is believed that the total of man-hours would be impressive. This is not to suggest that general and background materials are not of value to the analyst but to point out that under the present reporting system, reading or scanning of unrelated materials requires an inordinate number of man-hours.

To define more narrowly the subject formats of intelligence reporting would increase the collection work load, without doubt, but this increase should be more than compensated by the decrease in reading time of the production analyst. It should simplify, also, the subject coding process.

Indexing

The vast range of subjects and the detailed level of the Intelligence Subject Code has created a unique problem of indexing intelligence materials in the Central Reference files, in that general library referencing personnel

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cannot be expected to be familiar with the details of a wide variety of highly technical subject matter. Accurate indexing of technical materials has been a chronic problem. The "ideal" would be to have technical indexing done by qualified technicians and general reference indexing done by classification librarians. The hitch here is the economic use of professional talent.

One way to move towards the "ideal" in indexing might be to place indexing responsibility with the originators of requirements and with the originators of reports. Patently, these people would be considering subject materials from specialized viewpoints and could not be expected to take into account the general aspects of library indexing. If the indexing of the technicians were reviewed and supplemented by that of professional classification librarians, subject indexing would then have the benefit of the dual viewpoints. Instead of the necessity for all field collectors and Washington recipients to keep abreast of the requirements of all consumers, they would need only to be knowledgeable of the index code numbers applying to the subject materials, thereby utilizing the index code numbers as an automatic "address" to recipients.

Automation of Dissemination

If requirements and incoming documents were subject-coded in the same manner, the incoming materials could be matched by machine against the requirements and then routed automatically to the appropriate recipients. Admittedly, this idea depends upon utilization of some of the new library information systems now in evolution or electronic techniques and procedures yet to be developed. The reduction in numbers of digital subject codes applying to one document might make the matching of subject codes of incoming materials against those of the requirements a practicable operation.

Supporting Research Components

The objective of placing information in the hands of the intelligence production analyst within 24 hours implies that the speed with which intelligence judgments and estimates are made will be improved considerably.

When under pressure of close deadlines, in CIA/DD/I the intelligence officer must depend upon two main sources of material: 1) the files which he has gathered in his own office (including finished intelligence), and 2) OCR materials. His own files have been gleaned, chiefly, from the daily mail "take," and consist of materials which have been brought together physically "just in case." Usually, no attempt has been made at partial, descriptive rack-ups which would permit their utilization on a moment's notice, either to adjudge the validity, the value, or the significance of new information. OCR sources are reference-library type sources, largely, with no attempt at continuing maintenance of the partial rack-up.

One method to speed up intelligence production might be to establish

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a technical intelligence production level between the OCR reference files and the components responsible for economic, scientific, sociological, political and military intelligence. This level would be responsible for semi-finished rack-ups and write-ups of descriptive intelligence in technical fields, which presently cut across the vertical structure of CIA intelligence production.

Such an intermediate intelligence production level suggests an operation somewhat similar to that of the daily press. The completeness of newspaper reporting within hours of an event is not so much the result of news gathering "after the fact" but of preparation "before the fact"-- the extensive files of semi-finished background materials which are under constant revision and ready for use. The newspaper technique is concerned with getting the facts and presenting the story in a manner that will sell newspapers. Intelligence is a much more difficult job. In addition to getting the facts and presenting the story, the intelligence officer is required to sift the available facts from the mass of conflicting information, construct the story from partial facts, interpret its significance, and predict future trends in his particular field of responsibility.

It is recognized that no sharply defined parallels may be drawn between the production of newspapers and the production of intelligence but there exist a number of comparable problems in the two operations. Study of the publications techniques of such newspapers as the NEW YORK TIMES and the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR might generate some excellent ideas for improvement of the basic files of CIA and of the intelligence community.

Trial Operation Possibilities

Many of the modifications which would be necessary in terminal handling procedures could be tested beforehand under existing conditions with a relatively small outlay of funds. A pilot operation would permit the development of the requisite handling techniques, revision of intelligence reporting formats, resolution of security considerations, as well as other problems now unforeseen, and furnish a basis for computation of reliable estimates of space, personnel, equipment, and budget.

Whatever the final decision on the entire system, experimentation and trial of new techniques to speed up Washington distribution may prove worthwhile.

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Remarks:

Attached are comments on your paper from OCR, ORR and OCI. I am certain that you will find them valuable - they apparently result from serious consideration of the proposal. There may be more papers received from other DDI elements in the next week or two. I will pass them to you as received.

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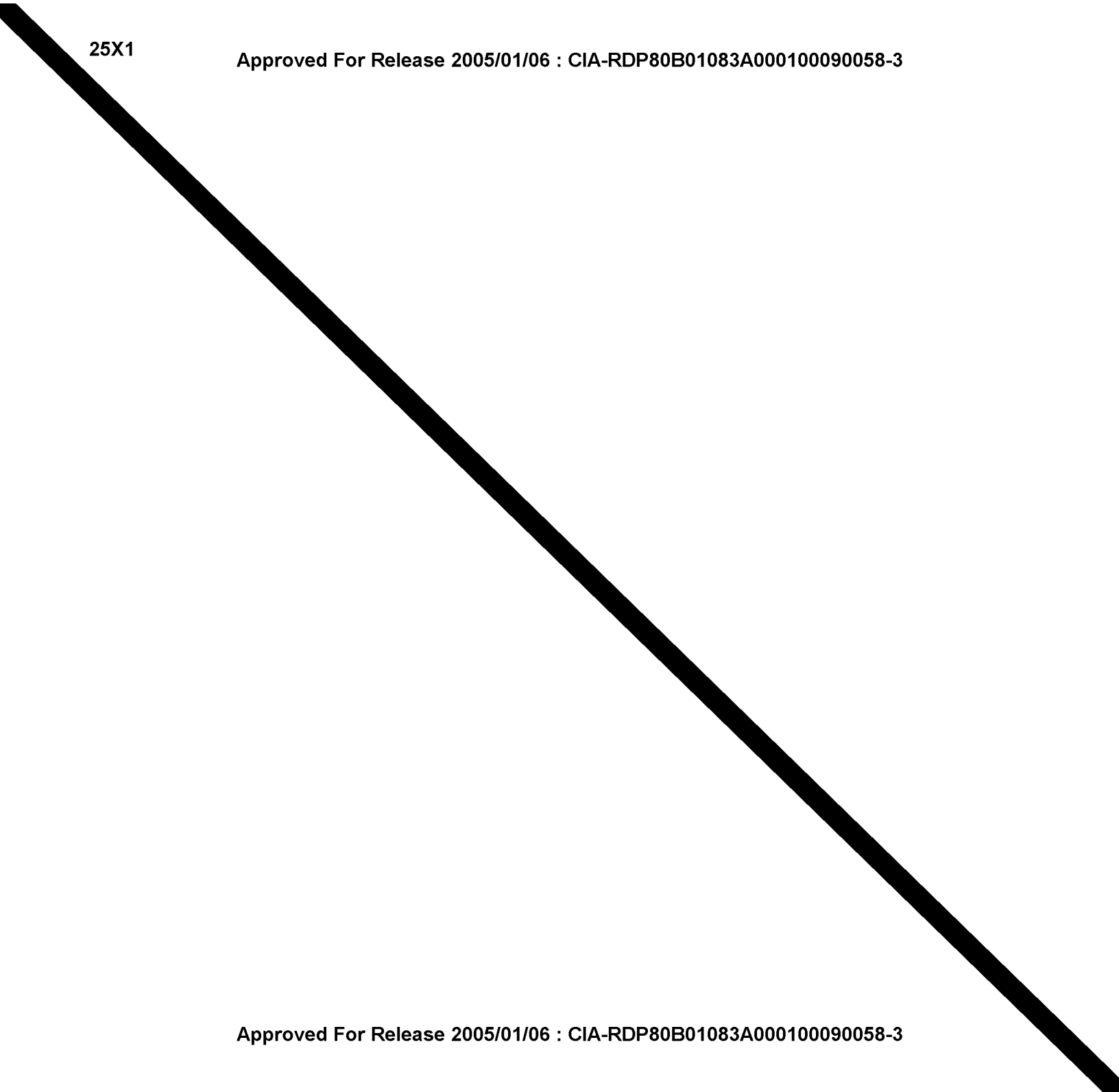

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